

Biography of Rachel Isidell Smith Orgill - wife of Mark Orgill
(My Grandmother)

Written by Almira T. Bothers as told by Sister Orgill.

I was born Oct. 8, 1859, at Provo Bench, Utah County, Utah. I was the daughter of Jackson Osbourne Smith (born April 12, 1816 at Rutherford Co. North Carolina, and Mary Maria Owens (born Sept. 12, 1818 at Florence Oneida Co. New York.)

My parents were married in the East and later went through the Nauvoo Temple and were sealed there. They were driven with the Saints and lived a while at Council Bluffs Iowa, also at Winter Quarters. They then came to Utah with ox and cattle teams.

Then my sister Eliza J. Smith Ivie was only three weeks old and they settled first on Provo Bench where I was born. They had a farm and my father worked at farming also worked in a grist mill grinding flour.

I was the next to the youngest of a family of thirteen children. Later we moved to Center Creek to the Jeff Hunter place later at Jordannell and finally returned to Iowa and Nebraska where my father could get work in order to take care of his family and to buy land when we came back to Utah.

I remember crossing the Platte River this being the second trip to Utah for my parents. In this company there were a number of wagons. When we arrived at the Platte River my brother John rode across the river with a fellow they called crazy John, they were to ford the river and my brother to drive stakes at certain distances, there was quick sand in the river and the stakes wouldn't hold. I remember seeing the wagon go out of sight. The horses (as this man had a team of horses) were good swimmers and went ahead. Finally the wagon came up alright and they crossed the river. There was a railroad bridge crossing the river and some flat hand cars. The men laid two large planks across the hand cars and rolled the wagon one at a time on the hand cars, they then woked the hand cars, and in this way got the wagon across the river.

My fathers wagon was the heaviest one to load on these hand cars. It was the last to be taken across, just as we got across the train came. The men swam the oxen across.

When we moved from Iowa to Nebraska we crossed the Missouri River on the ice. I also remember crossing the Green River where our wagons were ferried across on a boat. I remember some one carrying me to the river and I was taken on the boat.

We then came to Midway to live. Here we lived in the Fort, the way this fort was built, there were log houses built all around to form a square, between the houses was just a road way. In the center was the Public Square and a school house. Then the Indians were bad we all gathered in the school house, for safety. These buildings were all built out of logs. In this school house I attended school when only a child in the early seventies. During this time my father worked on the railroad at Promontory Point Echo Canyon. While he was working my mother was also busy caring for her family. She did lots of weaving for people when we lived at Center Creek. She wove a carpet for Jim Clydes Mother, also wove jeans, flannels and Lindsey cloth. The children picked the wool ready for weaving. Benjamin Peck made the loom my Mother used.

My father worked in Echo Canyon about two years. During this time my oldest sister and her husband Benjamin Peck came to Midway and assisted Mother and her children in moving to Scipio. He drove one team and my mother drove the other we children drove the cattle and walked most of the way. It took nearly a week before we arrived at Scipio. During our moves two of my brothers died. One age fourteen died at Provo Utah, the other one age eight died at Scipio, also a baby girl and a baby boy. This left my parents nine living children.

We lived in Scipio on a farm for a few years. While living here I attended school regular. For attendance we were given tickets and when so many tickets were received they were exchanged for a Testament. I received a Testament.

I also received the prettiest card in school, while attending school there. Ann Martin (A Sister to Will Bond's Mother) was the teacher. I recieved this card for repeating the times tables the best of any one in the school. We were taught the Bible in school.

Our next move was down the Sevier River, to Wellington Juab Co. Utah. There Will Orgill a brother of Mark Orgill still lives. Our pleasures and pastimes were mostly hikes and picnics.

One time I was with some young people we went for a boat ride down the Sevier River. The boat leaked we had to bail out the water and row back. Young people don't seem to sense danger at any time, or not very often at least.

While living at Wellington I met Mark Orgill (who was born at Derbyshire England and came to Utah for the gospel) He came to Wellington to homestead land, This was in Jan. 1875. We were married June 20, 1875 at Mt. Pleasant by Edward Clift. We lived here from June until in the fall. Mark working with his father making adobes. We then went to Wellington. to my fathers home for the fall and winter.

In the spring about April we moved back to Mt. Pleasant, rented a log house it was just across from a high rock wall which was once used for a fort to protect the people from the Indians. This part of the wall was still standing. It had port holes higher than a mans head, so as when the Indians shot from the outside they couldn't hit the people on the inside. The wall was wide at the bottom and tapered up at the top.

Our first child a girl was born while we were living at Mt. Pleasant. She was blessed at home and we named her Mary Ann.

She was so sick we didn't know whether she would live or not. She was about one month old at this time. She was born Jan. (, 1877 when she was two months old we started down the river to Wellington. It was at the time the U.S. Soldiers were going to Mountain Meadow to kill John D. Lee. We traveled from Nephi to Lavan with the soldiers and some of the old men rode with us. We camped near them at Lavan, we heard them blow their bugles. They all stood their guns up together like tick-i-ups.

Many was fretful and cross and were crying. Mark had taken the horses for water I was alone in the wagon with the baby. A Soldier came to the wagon looked in and counted then walked away. I was sure frightened but Mark soon came back. The next morning the soldiers traveled on and we went on our way to Wellington. Later we heard of John D. Lee being shot by the U.S. Soldiers. He was shot then fell over into his coffin.

Our first home in Wellington was when Mark dug a gut out cut three steps down. Then built up over the dugout with logs. There was a window in the gable end for light. It was a salt roof covered with split cedars, the split side down for the roof, the rounded part was covered with mud. It didn't leak and this made the room nice and warm. We white washed the logs with white clay. I rubbed the side of the dugout with my hands to make them smooth. It was clay ground and the dirt didn't rattle down I then went up in the hills got the white clay and white washed the walls with it. We had a board floor, a fire place in one corner and a stove in the other, we had a nice bed it was made in Mt. Pleasant. The boards were grooved and painted red. I put window curtains around the bed covered the lower part of the bed as the legs were high. We called them bed balances. I took good boxes and made a wash stand and dresser, this was a very nice room.

It was here where Thomas Jackson our second child our first boy was born. Aug. 22, 1878 Mark worked on the railroad. I stayed alone at nites with my two children. The railroad was near by. One nite I was sure frightened, I was dreaming I was pulling the sleeve of a night dress right side out and I was pushing so hard and pushed Tom out of bed. He began to cry and woke me up. I soon picked him up, but was sure frightened for I had hurt him. and being alone was afraid to have him cry. We were living here when the railroad came up, out of chicken creek canyon. In the fall I moved to my Mothers place. We had been living on the other side of 160 Acres. We were living here when Joseph Alvin was born Mar. 19, 1880.

When the ward in Scipio was organized, men came from Scipio to Wellington to organize a branch here, this was 19 miles. This is where our children Tom, Joe, and Emma were blessed all the same day.

When Joe was two months old My Father died. In about one year and five months my Mother died. She came to Provo to visit her girls, came down to Provo on Wednesday and died Saturday night. We still lived at Wellington in Mothers home, here our next two girls were born. Emma Jane born Apr. 13, 1882 and Mary Feb. 25, 1884. When Mary was a baby we moved up higher on the bench land. Before we moved on the bench the Pangrich dam broke this caused the Wellington dam to break also. The water came down a big hollow near the house, and we were afraid of it washing the house away. We moved the lot house upon the bench.

It was on the bench in the log house where Edith was born, Sept. 12, 1885. In July before Edith was a year old we came up to Daniel, Utah on a visit. As we couldn't do much till the dam was rebuilt. It was 18 miles to get work. Mark wasn't able to go this distance to work. His brother bought our homestead for \$200 and in Aug. 1885 we moved to Daniel. Mark plowed around a piece of ground and proved upon it in 1886.

The children were small when we came here. Mark bought a house from Joe Jacobs. We moved it on our land fixed it up then turned it into a school house, while we lived in one of John Jordans rooms. Later we moved into our house. Every Sunday I would move my bed and furniture out so as they could hold Sunday School. There were about forty children who attended Sunday School here.

They were Gordons, Jordons, Ivies, Billie Bethers Bjorkmans, Frank Bethers Jacobs, John Anderson and many others.

Whillingham was the School Teacher.

Mark had rheumatism for 20 years. Every winter but two he had the rheumatism so bad, but he never gave up his work. The children were small, Mark was in bed with rheumatism. Joe was working for other people or herding cows. I would help Tom haul rock until dinner time. Then I came to the house fixed dinner ready, then go out and haul rock until supper time, then come in and get supper.

Mark had farmed on shares until we could farm our own land. There were so many rocks to clear from the land before we could plow it. Sometimes the rocks were so large Tom and I couldn't lift them, so we put a plank up to the wagon bed and roll the rocks up the plank and into the wagon.

When we built the cellar I carried rocks to wall it up, and white washed it with lime, rubbed it with my hands just before I got through the lime began to eat my hands. This was in the fall before Thoebe was born.

We had a family of fourteen children one dying at birth leaving 13 children.

The ones born at Daniel were:

James William	born Apr. 2, 1887	Phoebe Hannah	born Apr. 24, 1895
Bessie	" May 29, 1889	Ethel	" June 16, 1897
Aura Bell	" May 23, 1891	Dora	" June 17, 1899
Minnie	" Feb. 19, 1893		
Lilly	Died at birth " " "		

I have always respected the Priesthood when I was so sick after the twins were born. Minnie lived but Lilly was dead. If I could of had medical aid maby she would of lived. Afterward I nearly lost my life, a clot of blood struck my heart, and I was so weak. The Elders were sent for and also the Doctor. The Doctor told them to to fix a plaster of flax seed and Mustard over my heart.

When the pain moved the nurse would move the poultice. I felt the pain go from my heart down across my abdomen into my right leg. I could only lay on my back. The Doctor said, if the clot dosen't move pneumonia would set in, but I began to get better and got well.

At one time Mark was so sick and so weak with rheumatism, we sent for the Elders. Uncle Billie Bethers, J.J. Howe, George Clift and John Clift, came and Administered to him. The next day he was so weak we had to get down close to him to hear him speak, his heart was so weak before this wd thought he would sure die before we got the Elders, but he began to improve after the Elders administered to him and finally got well. We knew it was the power of the Lord made manifest in our behalf. Ethel was born the next June, and still another girl Dora came to bless our home. It was through his faith and mine also the Elders that he got over the sick spell and lived several years latter.

Finally when Dora was six years old the rheumatism went to his heart. He said. "If the Priesthood can't save me the Dr. Can't." He passed away in 1905, leaving me with twelve children. Three were married Mary, Emma and Joe.

He was school trustee, Justice of the Peace, at the time of his death was acting teacher in the 1st Intermediate Dept., also clerk of school Board, he was Watermaster for Strawberry and Willow Creek Canal Co. At the time of his death the Sunday School class he taught walked in front of the carriage that packed his body carrying banners. The children walked from his house to the Church House, as the carriage (White Top) was drawn by horses the children could very easily keep in front, it being the 22th of Sept, it wasn't to hot for them.

Prayer has been my great help in rearing my family. I remember one time Bert Boren was so sick. They didn't think he would live. This happened before Mark died. They sent for the Elders. I don't remember them all, one anointed him, and Bishop McGuire sealed the anointing. He told the boy he would live, afterwards he wondered if he had said the right words. He was quiet uneasy, so he went out to the hay stack and prayed to the Lord to make known to him if he had said the right words. He felt the burning of the Holy Spirit within him. He knew he had done right. He went to the house and told the boy's father to move him into another room. He did this and the boy got well.

I have had many wonderful experiences to strengthen my testimony while rearing my family and the Lord has helped me at all times. My children all lived to be grown all have married, had families of their own. But since I laid their father away two of my married daughters have gone to the other side. Edith who was the wife of Jesse Gordon and Phoebe the wife of Charles Remund. She left four daughters to survive her.

While I was down on the Sevier, I was Counselor in the Relief Society. Before the wards were joined and Upper Daniel belonged to Center, I was counselor to Phoebe Bethers in Primary. and was also Pres. of Y.L.M.I.A. Edna McGuire Bethers and Lizzie Oaks Anderson were my Counselors.

After the wards were joined as the Daniel ward, I was Councilor to Jane Shelton Phoebe M. Bethers was Pres. of Relief Society of the Daniel Ward and remained Pres. until her death

Matilds Nelson was first Councilor, I was second and after Matilds died I became first Counselor which office I held at the time of Phoebe's death after which I was President in 1909 and served as Pres. for 8 years.

Carrie Anderson was my first Councilor, Nora Carlen second. Josephine Plummer, Eliza Thacker, Mary Adamson and Sarah C. Price served as Counselor to me.

I was also Mutual President for a while and Sunday School Teacher for years. When meetings were held in the school house on the hill above Billei Bethers, also a teacher with Joseph S. McDonald in Second Intermediate Class.

(Rachel Orgill died Apr. 3, 1939, at her home)